

*Stated Meeting, February 5, 1875.*

Present, 13 members.

Vice-President, MR. FRALEY, in the chair.

A letter enclosing his *carte de visite* photograph for the album was received from Dr. Robert Peter, dated Lexington, Ky., Jan. 28, 1875.

A letter of acknowledgment (92) was received from the Rantoul Literary Society, Jan. 26, 1875.

A letter of envoy was received from Mr. Alex. Agassiz, dated Cambridge, Jan., 1875, stating that missing numbers of his father's works, for the Society's set, were sent by express to supply the deficiency, and requesting the return of any duplicate parts in the possession of the Society.

Donations for the Library were received from Dr. Max. Marques de Carvalho, of Rio Janeiro; Mr. F. W. C. Trafford, of Zurich; the R. Belgian Academy; the Editors of *Revue Politique*, and *Nature*, and the *British Trade Journal*; the Royal Astronomical Society; Mr. Alex. Agassiz, of Cambridge, Mass.; the Franklin Institute; Editors of *Penn Monthly*, *Medical News*, *Journal of the Medical Sciences*, *Journal of Pharmacy*, and the *American Chemist*; Mr. H. C. Carey; the Chief of Engineers of the United States; and the Geological and Agricultural Survey of Texas.

The death of Mr. Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff, at Boston, Oct. 17, 1874, aged 63, was announced by the Secretary.

The death of Mr. Francis Kiernan, F.R.S., Dec. 31, 1874, was announced by the Secretary.

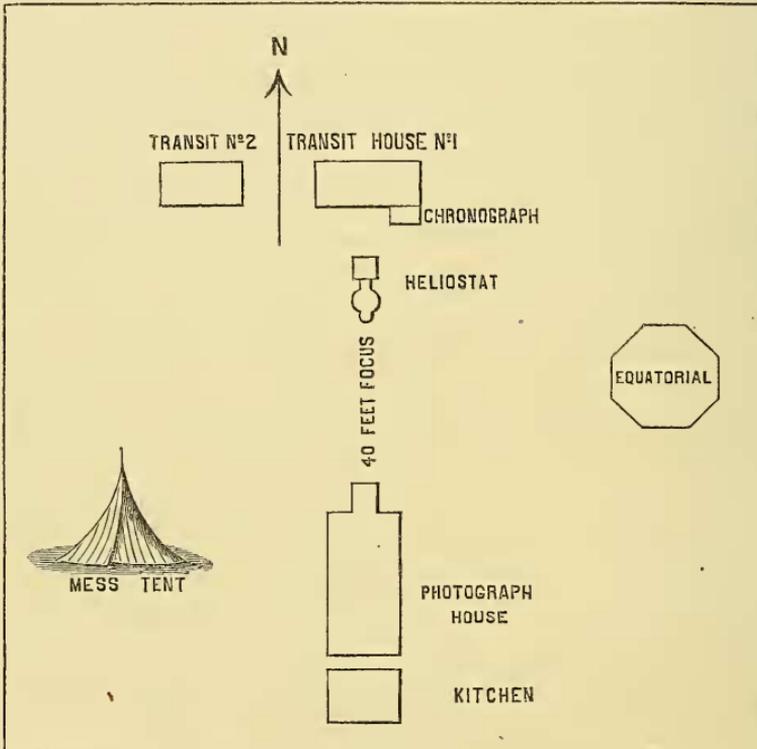
Mr. Coleman Sellers announced that he was prepared to read an obituary notice of the late Joseph Harrison at the next meeting.

A letter was received from Daniel B. Smith, of Germantown, Philadelphia, quoting a letter from Mrs. Davidson, dated Nagasaki, Dec. 10, 1874, describing the scene of observations at the time of transit:

TO THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY:

I have this morning received a letter from Prof. Davidson's wife, dated Nagasaki, Dec. 10, 1874, which I transcribe for the Society:

“We were 24 days on the passage over and remained one week in Yokahama and Yedo, before taking the steamer for Nagasaki. No time was to be lost, and at 12 o'clock, on the day of our arrival they had 30 coolies building the road up to the side of the observatory, which is 300 feet high, and about a mile and a half south of the town. They have been working night and day ever since, feeling somewhat hurried. You can imagine with what anxiety every cloud was watched for several days before—which had been hazy or cloudy in the mornings—blowing over by midday.



The preceding night was clear and beautiful until day-break, when clouds began rapidly to form, breaking away again about  $7\frac{1}{2}$ , and clouding over again by  $9\frac{1}{2}$ . The observers remained all night on the hill and the others were at their post by  $7\frac{1}{2}$  o'clock. I went up in a sedan chair (carried by four Coolies), and we were all at our posts of duty by ten o'clock and as the time draws nearer, you can imagine our suspense. In my husband's observatory (the large equatorial), just before the computed time, the sun seemed to be breaking through the clouds and all was in readiness; George, the largest boy holding the chronometers up to his father's eye and ear; and I seated (where I would see my husband's face,) with book and pencil in hand, with closed doors and perfect silence, save the regular

beats of the clock and chronometers. It was almost a solemn moment. The sun broke forth with one gleam—I was almost startled to my feet with the shout of “*Commence*,” given by my husband, as warning to the Photographers as the instant was about to arrive. In a few seconds he gave an exclamation of delight and the first contact was accomplished and duly recorded. After giving us an instantaneous peep, observations were kept up till the next critical moment of the second contact; the sun growing less bright, but still bright enough for observations, the second contact was seen and further observations as the body was passing over the sun—growing thicker and thicker and leaving scarcely a hope for the third contact and also for the fourth which were not visible and then the whole thing was over, not wholly successful, but by no means unsuccessful, and I think my husband is pretty well satisfied; he certainly feels that they made the most of the situation, everything working well and only failed on account of the weather.

One thing strikes me as very wonderful—of course the exact spot on the sun’s limb where the contact should appear was only known by computation from our previous data, and under such large magnifying power, which took in only about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  diameters of Venus, one minute of an arc would have been fatal. Mr. D. had gone over his calculations several times and that same morning had gone over them to satisfy himself, and then pointed his instrument and sure enough there came Venus, right in the centre of his pointing,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  minutes later than the English computed time, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  earlier than the American time.

I hope the Society will think this account worthy of an early publication.

Respectfully,

DANIEL B. SMITH.

*Germantown, 1st mo., 29th, 1875.*

The letter of Mrs. Davidson was ordered to be published as soon as possible.

The Secretary presented a communication, entitled “Notes on the Geology of West Virginia,” No. II., by Jno. J. Stevenson, Prof. of Geology, University of N. Y., and explained the author’s work in that region, in connection with the proposed occupation of a new district in Southwestern Pennsylvania by the Geological Survey of Pennsylvania. (See page 370.)

Mr. Fraley reported the receipts, and payment to the Treasurer, of \$152.79, being the last quarterly payment of the interest on the Michaux Legacy.

The following report of the Trustees of the Building Fund of the A. P. S. was read by its Treasurer, Mr. Marsh

" U. S. 5-20 Bond.. .. .	\$1,000 00
"Schuylkill Nav. Co. Boat and C. loan.....	500 00
"Pennsylvania State 6 per cent. bonds.....	1,500 00
"Philadelphia City " " .....	6,900 00
"Stock of the McKean and Elk Land and Improve- ment Co., 200 shares, subscribed.....	1,000 00
" Cash .....	3 91
	<hr/>
Total.....	\$10,903 91

Signed—" by order of the Trustees.

BENJAMIN V. MARSH, Treasurer."

PHILADELPHIA, FEB. 5, 1875.

In the absence of members of the Hall Committee, Mr. Fraley stated, that the city authorities had undertaken to make alterations in the lower stories of the Hall of the Society, in view of another court room ; and that the Insurance Companies had been consulted on the subject, and had given permission to make alterations and repairs. At his request the Secretary read from the minutes of July 17, and Aug. 21, 1863, the resolutions passed by the Society respecting the lease of said stories by the city.

Mr. J. S. Price expressed his conviction that danger to the Society's Cabinet and Library from fire was imminent ; the Secretary adding his testimony to that effect.

On motion, it was then unanimously

*Resolved*, That the subject of the city tenancy of the two lower stories of the Hall of the Society and the proper protection of the property, from fire, or other casualty, be referred to the Hall Committee, the Presiding Officer, Mr. Fraley, and the Treasurer, Mr. Price, with power to take such order as they may think proper in the premises.

And the meeting was adjourned.

---

*Stated Meeting, February 19, 1875.*

Present, 18 members.

Vice-President, MR. FRALEY, in the chair.

Letters of acknowledgment were received from the Imperial Academy at Vienna, (90, 91), Herr Tunner, Leoben, (90, 91), Dr. Rokitansky, Vienna (90, 91), Geological Society